

## **About Lone Star Legal Aid**

Lone Star Legal Aid (LSLA), a Texas nonprofit corporation, provides a full range of legal services to a significant number of low-income clients and the client community in 72 counties in the East Region of Texas and 4 counties in Southwest Arkansas. LSLA collaborates as a full partner with the equal justice community to meet the legal needs of all low-income Texans. LSLA is the fourth largest legal aid program in the nation based on poverty population, and has a proud tradition of providing high quality legal representation to low-income clients and a long record of community involvement.

LSLA serves approximately 1,088,000 (2000 U.S. Poverty Census Data) low-income persons, and has been consistently noted for its excellent litigation efforts on behalf of its clients and its community involvement in the region. This 60,000 square mile area includes numerous rural communities, as well as the Houston metropolitan area. Branch offices are located in Angleton, Beaumont, Bellville, Belton, Bryan, Conroe, Galveston, Houston, Longview, Nacogdoches, Paris, Texarkana, Tyler, and Waco.

A board of directors appointed by local bar associations and client groups governs LSLA and is responsible for broad policy making under the Legal Services Corporation Act. LSLA has developed a capable, dedicated and experienced team of 70 attorneys, 10 paralegals, and 60 support staff. Approximately 2,500 private attorneys practicing in the region assist the LSLA mission by providing pro bono legal services to clients within the region.

LSLA delivers a full range of civil legal services to eligible clients. LSLA accepts cases on a priority basis. LSLA advocates represent eligible clients at all levels from Justice Court and administrative hearings to the United States Supreme Court and the Texas Supreme Court, as well as giving advice and brief service. Priorities are determined by periodic surveys of clients, private bar, bench, and interested persons to determine priorities for case acceptance and service provision. The LSLA priorities developed by this process include the following: 1) the delivery of legal services; 2) advice, brief services and referral; 3) maintaining, enhancing and protecting income and economic stability; 4) preserving housing and related housing needs; 5) improving outcomes for children; 6) seeking or maintaining safety, stability, and health or well-being; and 7) assisting populations with special vulnerability. The major case categories are: consumer, health, income maintenance, housing, family with abuse or violence, employment, individual rights, other family and miscellaneous.

LSLA attorneys spend most of their time representing clients and litigating cases involving the interests of individual clients. Frequently, this litigation affects the rights of broad categories or classes of clients. As a result, LSLA develops and provides community legal education and materials in all priority legal needs areas and promotes information which prevents legal problems from arising in its work with individual clients and client groups.

Recent litigation on behalf of clients embrace cases involving civil rights, consumer rights, family rights and custody issues, health care, housing, education, and federal entitlement programs. Over time, LSLA attorneys have received over 200 publicized reported decisions, and many significant unreported decisions too numerous to mention for the benefit of our clients and

client communities. These decisions range from the Texas Court of Appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court and add to a long LSLA tradition of handling cases which have a significant impact on individual client lives.

During 2004, LSLA attorneys provided legal services in over 12,000 cases, provided fair housing counseling and community legal education on over 30,000 occasions, and obtained over 2,100 family law decisions, 500 public benefit decisions, and over 300 housing decisions.

Since receiving grants for the Fair Housing Service Center, the Violence Against Women Project, and the Food Stamp Outreach Project, LSLA has increased its community legal education efforts considerably. Due to the Violence Against Women Project and grant received from the Department of Justice, LSLA now works in collaboration with the twenty-nine women's shelters in the region to provide legal representation as well as extensive community legal education. The Fair Housing Service Center provides fair housing counseling to class members of the Young v. Jackson litigation, provides oversight to approximately ninety Public Housing Authorities and Section 8 Agencies in the region, as well as an assortment of other community legal education opportunities through a grant from HUD. With a grant from the Department of Agriculture, LSLA provides outreach to identify, locate and perform eligibility screening and application support for many Texans eligible for Food Stamps. LSLA started a Hepatitis C Project in 2000, the results of which were published in 35 Clearinghouse Rev. 21 (May-June 2001). In all, LSLA works with over 500 service agencies and organizations within the region.

LSLA receives annualized funding for the free services provided by its staff from the Legal Services Corporation, the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, and local United Way agencies. Specialized grants are received from various federal agencies and private foundations, as well as individual donations. The US Internal Revenue Service recognizes LSLA as a tax-exempt organization, and contributions are tax deductible to the donor. Donations can be sent to Lone Star Legal Aid, 1415 Fannin, 3rd Floor, Houston, Texas 77002. For more information on how you can support LSLA, please contact Paul E. Furrh, Jr., Chief Executive Officer, at PFurrh@lonestarlegal.org or 936-560-2012 x 27.

Serving the East Region of Texas Since 1948: Angleton, Beaumont, Bellville, Belton, Bryan, Conroe, Galveston, Houston, Longview, Nacogdoches, Paris, Texarkana, Tyler, Waco

"A United Way Agency"

## ***Cases We Handle***

<b>Family Law</b>	<b>Welfare and Income Assistance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorce/Annulment</li> <li>• Custody/Visitation</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Spouse Abuse</li> <li>• Child Abuse</li> <li>• Guardianship</li> <li>• Name Change</li> <li>• Paternity</li> <li>• Parental Rights Termination</li> <li>• Adoption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)</li> <li>• Food Stamps</li> <li>• Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</li> <li>• Social Security</li> <li>• County Welfare</li> <li>• Unemployment Insurance</li> <li>• Veterans' Benefits</li> <li>• Workers' Compensation</li> </ul>
<b>Discrimination</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on race, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, or family size</li> <li>• In employment, housing, education, public accommodations, or government programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work safety and health</li> <li>• Wage claims</li> <li>• Unlawful terminations</li> </ul>
<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Consumer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Medicaid</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Medicare</a></li> <li>• Nursing home problems</li> <li>• County health care</li> <li>• Denial of emergency room care</li> <li>• Access to Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fraud or deceptive trade practices</li> <li>• Warranties or breaches of contract</li> <li>• <a href="#">Debt collection abuses</a></li> <li>• Repossessions</li> <li>• Rent-to-own</li> <li>• Bankruptcy</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Neighborhood Problems</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Housing</li> <li>• Foreclosures</li> <li>• <a href="#">Evictions</a></li> <li>• Utility shutoffs</li> <li>• Code enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal services</li> <li>• Public utilities</li> <li>• Environmental problems</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Miscellaneous</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handicapped education programs</li> <li>• Bilingual education programs</li> <li>• Expulsion and suspension from school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporation</li> <li>• License suspension/revocation</li> <li>• Wills and estates</li> </ul>

